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## **OLR Bill Analysis**

### **sHB 6624**

#### ***AN ACT CONCERNING MINOR REVISIONS TO THE EDUCATION STATUTES.***

#### **SUMMARY:**

This bill:

1. requires interdistrict magnet school operators to annually report aggregate as well as individual school financial audits to the education commissioner;
2. requires exclusive use of “state-assigned student identifier” when referring to identifying codes used to track official student documents and expands the list of relevant documents and tracking purposes;
3. requires the State Department of Education (SDE) to develop and implement a new state longitudinal data system that acquires many aspects of the existing public school information system (PSIS), expands criteria for collected data, imposes new limits on public access to data, and grants superintendents access to certain data;
4. exempts individual teacher performance and evaluation records collected by the state longitudinal data system from public access requests;
5. requires the coordinated system of early care and education and child development (see BACKGROUND) to compare and analyze data collected by the state longitudinal data system, rather than PSIS;
6. requires model teacher evaluation guidelines to consider control factors tracked by the state longitudinal data system, rather than

PSIS;

7. extends, by two years (now beginning July 1, 2013 and ending July 1, 2015) the education commissioner's annual reporting timetable to the Education Committee on SDE progress developing and implementing the state longitudinal data system;
8. eliminates indemnification eligibility for teacher mentors and assessors currently offered by employing boards of education;
9. permits marital and family therapists employed by local or regional boards of education to provide services to students, families, and student parents or guardians; and instructs the State Board of Education (SBE) to make regulations authorizing this provision; and
10. changes the procedure for establishing tuition rates for vocational apprenticeship programs.

The bill also makes several technical and conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2013, except for the provisions related to the public school information system, teacher indemnification, and comprehensive professional development plans, which take effect upon passage.

## **§§ 1-2 — MAGNET SCHOOL FINANCIAL AUDITS**

The bill specifies that interdistrict magnet school operators, rather than the schools themselves, must annually give the education commissioner financial audits. Additionally, the bill requires operators to report two types of audits, rather than just one. The first type of audit is for each individual magnet school, as required under current law, that is operated by the operator. The second type is an aggregate audit combining all magnet schools operated by the operator. By law, a magnet school operator may be (1) a local or regional school district; (2) a regional education service center; (3) multiple school districts under a cooperative agreement; or (4) the

Board of Trustees of the Community Technical Colleges, which currently operates on behalf of Manchester and Quinebaug Valley Community Colleges and Goodwin College.

The bill also makes related changes in provisions that adjust magnet school grant payouts based upon annual financial audits. It requires that the final grant payment to a magnet operator in a fiscal year be adjusted based upon the aggregate financial audit submitted by the operator, rather than the audit submitted by individual magnet schools.

### **§§ 3-4 — USE OF STUDENT IDENTIFIERS**

The bill (1) requires that a student's state-assigned identifier be used to track him or her and (2) eliminates the school district's option to use a district-provided identifier.

#### **§ 3 — *Official Student Documents***

The bill requires all local and regional boards of education to include a student's state-assigned student identifier on all official student documents, rather than on transcripts, as required under current law. The bill's definition of "official student documents" includes (1) transcripts, (2) report cards, (3) attendance records, (4) disciplinary reports, and (5) student withdrawal forms.

#### **§ 4 — *Post-High School Tracking***

Under current law, the Board of Regents for Higher Education (BOR) must require public and independent colleges and universities to track the state-assigned or district-provided student identifiers of all in-state students until they graduate or end their enrollment. The bill eliminates (1) BOR's role and (2) the requirement that the institutions track students with district-provided identifiers.

### **§ 5 — PUBLIC SCHOOL INFORMATION SYSTEM AND STATE LONGITUDINAL DATA SYSTEM**

The bill requires the State SDE to develop and implement a new state longitudinal data system that will use the data collected by the current PSIS. It also expands criteria for collected data, imposes new

limits on public access to data, and grants superintendents access to certain data.

### ***Systems' Purpose***

The bill gives the new system the purposes of the existing PSIS, plus several additional purposes. Specifically, it reassigns to the state longitudinal data system the purposes of (1) facilitating compliance with state and federal reporting requirements; (2) improving school-to-school, district-to-district information exchanges; and (3) maintaining confidentiality of student and staff data. The bill specifies that confidential staff data includes the results of performance evaluations and related information.

The bill also requires SDE to develop the state longitudinal data system to:

1. track and report data on district performance growth so that boards of education may use it to evaluate teacher and student performance and growth,
2. collect data about students who later enroll at in-state public and private colleges and universities, and
3. develop a way to access and share data with in-state college and university systems.

### ***Categories of Collected Data***

The bill expands current provisions that define data collected about students and teachers. By law, SDE may collect data about individual student performance on the statewide mastery exams. The bill additionally allows SDE to collect and use data to (1) compare the progress of the same group of students who take each exam and (2) better analyze school performance. Also, the bill expands the list of collectable teacher data to include data related to performance evaluations or other evaluation-based information.

### ***Permanent Employees Access to Collected Data***

Under current law, full-time, permanent employees of an education

nonprofit institution may access student information system data. The bill eliminates these employees ability to access information relating to teacher performance evaluation data or other information relating to evaluations.

### ***Superintendent Access to Collected Data***

The bill permits any public school district superintendent, or his or her designee, to access information in the state longitudinal data system that relates to the statewide mastery examination, which they are currently able to access in PSIS. These are to determine (1) exam dates, (2) exam scores, and (3) levels of exam achievement for students enrolled in or transferring to the superintendent's school district.

## **§ 7 — TEACHER INDEMNIFICATION**

The bill removes teacher mentors and assessors from the class of employees eligible under current law to receive indemnification from their respective boards of education for fees and costs relating to legal claims, demands, suits, or judgments. By law, claims eligible for indemnification must be related to negligence or civil rights and must arise while the employee was acting within the scope of his or her employment.

## **§ 11 — VOCATIONAL EDUCATION EXTENSION FUND**

The bill requires the technical high school system board, rather than SBE, to set tuition fees for students in preparatory and supplemental programs, including apprenticeship programs, established under the Vocational Education Extension Fund (see BACKGROUND). Also, the bill eliminates the \$100 fee ceiling for enrollment in a single apprenticeship program or course.

## **BACKGROUND**

### ***Vocational Education Extension Fund***

This fund is established by SBE. It contains a "vocational education extension account," which must be used to operate preparatory and supplemental programs (including apprenticeships) and to buy material and equipment required for program operation.

***Coordinated System of Early Care and Education and Child Development***

This system was commissioned by law in 2011 for creation by July 1, 2013. The system must consist of comprehensive and aligned policies, responsibilities, practices, and services for young children and their families, including prenatal care and care for children from birth to age eight to ensure optimal health, safety, and learning for each child.

***Related Bill***

sHB 6359, reported favorably by the Education and Finance, Revenue and Bonding committees, creates an office to administer the coordinated system of early care and education and child development.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Education Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 26 Nay 0 (03/28/2013)